

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 DHA-02 L-03

PA-01 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SS-15 NSC-05

NSCE-00 INRE-00 /060 W

-----096721 180836Z /20

O 180730Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8948

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE IMMEDIATE

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: CARR PFOR CT US

SUBJ: APPARENT DETENTION OF AMERICAN JOURNALIST JONATHAN RANDALL

REF: BANGUI 1468

1. ACCORDING TO HOTEL STAFF, CAE POLICE TOOK WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT JONATHAN RANDALL FROM HIS HOTEL IN BANGUI SOMETIME AFTER AP CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL GOLDSMITH WAS PICKED UP THE EVENING OF JULY 14 (REFTEL). POLICE HAD SHOWN NO INTEREST IN RANDALL WHEN THEY PICKED UP GOLDSMITH, BUT THEY APPARENTLY CAME BACK FOR HIM LATER THE NIGHT OF JULY 14 OR THE MORNING OF JULY 15. HIS LUGGAGE IS GONE AND HOTEL BILL PAID, BUT HE DID NOT MAKE HIS SCHEDULED FLIGHT OUT JULY 15.

2. INQUIRIES WITH THE POLICE THE MORNING OF JULY 16 PRODUCED NOTHING. THE CHARGE FINALLY REACHED THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, WHO SAID HE HAD BEEN OUT OF TOWN BRIEFLY AND WOULD HAVE TO BRING HIMSELF UP TO DATE. CHARGE TELEPHONED DIRECTOR GENERAL'S HOME REPEATEDLY JULY 16 BUT WAS UNABLE TO CONTACT HIM AGAIN.

3. CHARGE MADE DEMARCHE TO SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN

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MINISTRY JULY 17, ASKING THAT THE EMBASSY'S CONSULAR OFFICER BE GIVEN ACCESS TO RANDALL. SECGEN SAID HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THE CASE. HE ASKED WHETHER THE TWO JOURNALISTS HAD ABIDED BY ALL CAE REGULATIONS, SUCH AS GETTING PERMISSION FOR VISIT AND SUBMITTING THEIR STORIES AND PHOTOS FOR CENSORSHIP. CHARGE REPLIED THAT HE ONLY MET THEM SOCIALLY BUT KNEW THAT THEY HAD BEEN RECEIVED BY THE CAE MINISTER OF INFORMATION ON JULY 14. SECGEN ASKED FOR

A DIPLOMATIC NOTE AND PROMISED FOREIGN MINISTRY WOULD PURSUE THE MATTER ON A "POLITICAL LEVEL" BECAUSE OF INTEREST IN GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. CHARGE AGAIN EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO RANDALL.

4. COMMENT: IT IS STILL POSSIBLE THAT GOLDSMITH AND RANDALL WERE HUSTLED AWAY BY THE POLICE TO SEE THE EMPEROR AT THE IMPERIAL COURT. THE POLICE MIGHT NOT KNOW THE DETAILS OF WHAT WAS GOING ON, AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY COULD EASILY BE TOTALLY IN THE DARK. HOWEVER, A VISIT TO THE EMPEROR SEEMS A LESS LIKELY EXPLANATION AS TIME PASSES. WE ARE SENDING THE REQUESTED DIPLOMATIC NOTE DETAILING WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT RANDALL'S DETENTION AND REQUESTING CONSULAR ACCESS TO HIM. WE WILL KEEP AFTER THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. SMITH

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Message Attributes

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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Litigation History:
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